

**NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
SPECIAL EDUCATION  
PROGRAM APPROVAL VISITATION  
CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW**

**Second Start Alternative High School  
SUMMARY REPORT**

**James Snodgrass, Executive Director  
Ted Lambrukos, Director of Adolescent Services**

Chairpersons, Visiting Team:  
Kathryn L. Skoglund, Education Consultant  
Dr. Richard W. Ayers, Education Consultant

Site Visit Conducted on March 10-11, 2010  
Report Date, August 18, 2010  
Revised September 8, 2010

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## **I. TEAM MEMBERS**

### **Visiting Team Members:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL ROLE</b>
Chairpersons: Kathryn L. Skoglund Dr. Richard W. Ayers	Education Consultant Education Consultant
Rhonda Bergman Marby Blanchard Marilyn MacArthur	Science Teacher Special Education Coordinator Special Education Teacher

### **Building Level Team Members from Second Start Alternative High School and LEA:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>PROFESSIONAL ROLE</b>
Jonathan Sadowski	Teacher: English/Science
Sara Gray	Teacher: Math/Social Studies
Sherry Burbank	LEA Representative
W.A. Dinan, Ph.D.	LEA Representative
Deb Brenner	Transitional Services Coordinator
Richard Mitchell	Teacher; Math/Social Studies
Kelly Raitt	Teacher: English/Science

## II. INTRODUCTION

Second Start Alternative High School (AHS) is a private, non-profit alternative day school located in Concord, NH for up to 38 male and female students with and without educational disabilities. Second Start is currently approved by the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education to provide special education to students with disabilities who have been identified as having one or more of the following disabilities: emotional disturbance, speech-language impairments, specific learning disability, and other health impairments. Second Start's small class sizes, low student/teacher ratio, and opportunities to participate in the Transitional Employment and Training Program (TET) provide an alternative educational setting for students who have not previously succeeded in the traditional school setting. Second Start was established in 1979 and is based on the belief that a small, structured and individualized program option is helpful to some students as they work toward academic and personal goals.

Second Start Alternative High School exists to help previously unsuccessful students resume or complete their high school education. Using instruction, modeling, and a variety of experiential activities, the Second Start staff creates a positive environment where students become effective learners and productive citizens in their communities. Second Start currently provides credit opportunity in English, Math, Science, Social Studies and Physical Education. Second Start does not offer its own diploma, and states that students are eligible to earn credits from their respective sending high school. The sending school district awards the diploma based on credits acquired at Second Start and approved by the sending school district. It is the goal of Second Start to have students in a full-day program; half of the day is spent at Second Start, the other half either in the home high school, or participating in the Transitional Employment and Training (TET). TET comprises individualized, community based training services for in school, at-risk adolescents ages 14 to 21. According to the Second Start website, TET is designed to evaluate the social and vocational skills of students with disabilities who are transitioning from a school environment to the world of work. The services provided through TET include employment training, placement in a work environment, ongoing support in the work setting, and weekly review in a classroom setting. It is important to note that while TET was approved in 2005 by the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education as a special education "program", since that time approval expectations have changed. The NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education considers TET as a "service"; as such it does not require special education approval. The visiting team certainly recognized the importance and impact of services provided through TET and found that there was evidence that TET students have demonstrated success in the pre-vocational and vocational opportunities provided to them.

Second Start students struggle with learning issues and behaviors. After years of failure in their previous schools, these students tend to see teachers and authority figures as inherently adversarial and they bring this attitude with them to the alternative high school. The staff recognizes this and is committed to helping students create a new educational reality for themselves.

## **SCHOOL PROFILE**

<b>SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10</b>
Student Enrollment <u>as of December 1</u>	35	<b>On 12/1 = 29 (Population of both Second Start Alt. High School and TET)</b>
Do you accept out-of-state students? If so, list number from each state in 09-10	<b>No</b>	
Number and Names of Sending New Hampshire LEAs (as of October 1, 2009)	SAU 8 (Concord), SAU 46 (Merrimack Valley) SAU 49 (Ossipee), SAU 53 (Pembroke)	
# of Identified Students Suspended One or More Times <b>(In/Out)</b>	11	<b>On 12/1 = 22</b>
Average Length of Stay for Students	<b>1-3 years</b>	<b>2 years</b>
<b><u>STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS</u></b>		
Student/Teacher Ratio (as of Oct. 1)	<b>4.5 to 1</b>	<b>On 12/1 =3.5 to 1</b>
# of Certified Administrators	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>
# of Certified Teachers	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
# of Teachers with Intern Licenses	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
# of Related Service Providers	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
# of Paraprofessionals	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
# of Professional Days Made Available to Staff	<b>12.5</b>	<b>12.5</b>

### **III. PURPOSE AND DESIGN OF THE CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW PROCESS**

The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) conducted a Special Education Program Approval Visit to Second Start Alternative High School on March 10-11, 2010 for the purpose of reviewing the present status of programs and services made available to children and youth with educational disabilities. Program Approval Visits are conducted using a Case Study Model that is a focused review. This focused review permits the NHDOE to leverage its impact for change and improvement within private special education schools statewide, by focusing the attention of all educators on the following three areas of critical importance in the provision of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with disabilities.

- ♦ Access to the General Curriculum
- ♦ Transition
- ♦ Behavior Strategies and Discipline

As part of this compliance review, students were randomly selected by the NHDOE prior to the visit, and staff was asked to present these students' case studies at the visit to determine compliance with state and federal special education rules and regulations.

Other activities related to this NHDOE Case Study Compliance Visit included the review of:

- ♦ All application materials submitted
- ♦ Status of corrective actions since the last NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Visit
- ♦ Personnel credentials for special education staff (verified by NHDOE)
- ♦ Program descriptions and NHSEIS verification reports
- ♦ All data collected during the visit

- ♦ Any new or changed special education programs seeking approval from the NHDOE Second Start Alternative High School has submitted a request for a reduction in capacity to be effective for the 2010-11 school year.

The New Hampshire Department of Education provided a visiting team of professional educators to work collaboratively with staff in each of the schools in conducting the Case Study Compliance Review and the varied data collection activities. Throughout the entire review process, the visiting team worked in collaboration with the staff of Second Start Alternative High School. Their professionalism, active involvement in the process and cooperation were greatly appreciated and well recognized.

Evidence of the work conducted and results related to student outcomes were gathered throughout the process, guided by the materials and templates provided by the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education. Examples of evidence included student individual education plans (IEPs), progress reports, samples of student work, grades, extracurricular involvement, permanent records, curriculum, etc. Input was gathered from key constituents, including interviews with professional staff, parents, administrators, and in some cases, students. In addition, classroom observations were conducted for each of the case studies being reviewed. The collective data were summarized by the building level team. The summaries, included in the following pages, outline identified areas of strength and areas needing improvement.

#### **IV. STATUS OF PREVIOUS NHDOE SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL REPORT AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS**

Based on review of the June 2, 2005, NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Report the following patterns were identified as needing improvement:

<b>Findings of Noncompliance</b>	<b>Status as of August 29, 2006</b>	<b>Status as of March 10-11, 2010</b>
<b>ED 1109.01 Elements of an IEP: Lack of measurable goals</b>	Met	Not Met (based on NH Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities, June, 2008)
<b>ED 1133.05 Program Requirements: Second Start does not have consultants for content areas not covered by certified staff</b>	Met	Met

#### **March 10-11, 2010 CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW RESULTS**

Data collection is an important part of the NHDOE Special Education Case Study Compliance Review Process. In order to monitor whether or not special education programs are in compliance in the three focus areas, and determine any root causes of problems that may be identified through the case study process, it is essential that each case study team dig deeply into the data, and not just take a surface look. This process takes time, and the entire team working with the child being studied must be involved in collecting and analyzing the data, as well as presenting and summarizing the data with the visiting team. As such, the NHDOE works with educational communities (schools or private settings) to determine the number and type of case studies to be prepared and presented, to ensure that building teams are not inundated with much more data than they can possibly analyze and to allowing teams to

reflect upon and generalize their newly found knowledge of their programs, practices, policies and procedures.

Two students from Second Start Alternative High School were randomly selected for the Case Study Reviews, one age 17 and the other age 16. The 17-year-old female has been a student at the SSAHS for three years. The second student is a 16-year-old male diagnosed with Learning Disability accompanied by some social/emotional concerns.

### LEA SURVEYS

Private schools provide necessary options to New Hampshire students with educational disabilities. Effective partnerships with LEAs are an important part of establishing and implementing successful private special education programs that improve student outcomes. By surveying LEA perceptions of current program(s), private schools can self assess these relationships and determine if there are areas in need of improvement. To this end, Second Start Alternative High School distributed the LEA Survey to the contact people in all LEAs that have students currently enrolled in the school. They received a 100% response from the LEAs.

The ratings from the sending districts regarding their satisfaction with Second Start were quite positive. The analysis of the feedback completed by the Second Start staff is as follows:

- Strengths: relationships with students, families, and school districts; communication; positive culture
- Areas to improve: educational program; academic assessment; behavioral assessment
- Conclusions: “Second Start Alternative High School is a positive high school that has excellent relationships with key stakeholders and is a school that LEAs strongly consider in making choices for out of district students. It seems we can make gains by improving our curriculum and assessment abilities.”

### SUMMARY REPORT OF SENDING LEAs

Name of Private School: <b>Second Start Alternative High School</b>					
Total number of surveys sent: <b>5</b>		Total # of completed surveys received: <b>5</b>		Percent of response: <b>100%</b>	
Number of students placed by: LEA: <b>17</b>			Court: <b>0</b>		Parent: <b>0</b>
<b>SCALE 4 STRONGLY AGREE 3 AGREE 2 DISAGREE 1 STRONGLY DISAGREE</b>					
	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
1. The private school team has positive expectations for students.	<b>5</b>				
2. I am satisfied with the educational program at the above school.	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>			
3. The school consistently follows special education rules and regulations.	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			
4. The school has an effective behavioral program (if applicable).	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>			
5. I am satisfied with the related services provided by the school.		<b>2</b>			<b>3</b>
6. The school implements all parts of students' IEPs.	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			
7. I feel the school provides the necessary skills to allow the student to make progress on the IEP goals.	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			
8. The school program measures academic growth.	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>			
9. The school program measures behavioral growth (if applicable).	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>			
10. The school completes a minimum of 3 comprehensive reports per year on each child with a disability enrolled.	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>			

11. Progress reports describe the child's progress toward meeting the IEP goals, include a record of attendance, and are written in terminology understandable to the parent.	4	1			
12. Progress reports are provided to the LEA and to the parent of the child.	5				
13. I am satisfied with the way the school communicates students' progress.	5				
14. The school communicates effectively with parents.	5				
15. The school communicates effectively with the LEA.	5				
16. The school involves parents in decision-making.	5				
17. The school actively plans for future transition to a less restrictive placement.	4	1			
18. If the school finds it necessary to change or terminate placement, they notify the LEA by convening the IEP team to: review the concerns, review/revise the IEP, discuss the placement and determine if the facility can fully implement the IEP and provide FAPE.	5				
19. The school team sets meeting times that are convenient for both parents and LEA.	5				
20. The school has met my expectations.	5				
21. I have a good relationship with the school.	5				
22. I would enroll other students at the school.	5				

**Analysis of Responses:**

**Strengths:** 1) Relationships with students, families and school districts, 2) Communication 3) Positive Culture

**Areas To Improve:** 1) Educational Planning to include a viable curriculum, 2) Standards based assessments of student performance 3) Behavioral Assessments

**Conclusion:** Second Start Alternative High School is a positive high school setting for at risk students. The school maintains a close relationship with sending school districts and is very attentive to individual student needs. The program has limitations in the established curriculum and strategies for assessment of student learning. In addition, the school staffing pattern must include a certified special education administrator.

**PARENT PARTICIPATION**

One of the defining features of effective schools is strong parent/community relations and open communication. Having parents as active stakeholders in the NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Process ensures broader perspectives and brings forth new ideas. In addition, including the parent perspective enhances and strengthens the teams' case study presentations, and makes for stronger school/parent relationships. As such, parent participation and input is a required part of the NHDOE Special Education Program Approval Process. In order to ensure parent participation and feedback, the NHDOE, Bureau of Special Education involves parents in a variety of aspects of the Special Education Program Approval Process. First, parents are encouraged to be active participants in the case study presentations; second, parents of the children presented in the case study process are formally interviewed; and third, the school is required to send all parents of students with disabilities a written survey with a request to respond. Below is a summary of the results of the parent survey, along with a summary of the comments/feedback provided to the visiting team during this Case Study Compliance Review.

The Parent Survey instrument addressed areas of interaction with non-disabled peers, safety of students, participation in extra-curricular activities, transition, and behavior management. Analysis by the Second Start staff produced these findings:

- Strengths: transitions from school to school, Transition planning and behavior management.
- Areas for Improvement: communication to families from Second Start staff about what they are doing and how they are supporting students.
- Areas to Target: improve parent participation in students' programs; additional transition planning to better prepare for high school and post-secondary needs.



**SUMMARY OF PARENT SURVEY DATA**

Name of Private School: <b>Second Start Alternative High School</b>				
Total number of surveys sent: <b>18</b>	Total # of completed surveys received: <b>9</b>	Percent of response: <b>50%</b>		
<b>SCALE      3 = COMPLETELY                  2 = PARTIALLY      1 = NOT AT ALL</b>				
<b>ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM:</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
I am satisfied with my child's program and the supports that he/she receives.	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>		
My child has opportunities to interact with non-disabled peers on a regular basis.	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>		
I am adequately informed about my child's progress.	<b>9</b>			
My child is informed about and encouraged to participate in school activities outside of the school day, and is offered necessary supports.	<b>9</b>			
My child feels safe and secure in school and welcomed by staff and students.	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>		
A variety of information (observations, test scores, school work, parent input) was used in developing my child's IEP.	<b>9</b>			
I am satisfied with the progress my child is making toward his/her IEP goals.	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>		
<b>FOR PARENTS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY:</b>				
My child earns credits toward a regular high school diploma in all of his/her classes.	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>		
<b>TRANSITION:</b>				
I am satisfied with the planning and support provided for the moves my child has made from grade to grade and school to school.	<b>9</b>			
All of the people who are important to my child's transition were part of the planning.	<b>9</b>			
<b>FOR PARENTS OF STUDENTS AGE 16 OR OLDER ONLY:</b>				
I am satisfied with the written secondary transition plan that is in my child's IEP.	<b>5</b>			
<b>BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE:</b>				
My child's classroom behaviors affect his/her ability to learn. <i>If the answer is yes, please answer the next two questions. If no, skip to OTHER.</i>	<b>YES</b>		<b>NO</b>	
	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
I have been involved in the development of behavior interventions, strategies and supports for my child.	<b>6</b>			
I am satisfied with the way the school is supporting my child's behavioral, social and developmental needs.	<b>6</b>			
<b>OTHER:</b>				
I fully participate in special education decisions regarding my child.	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>		
I have been provided with a copy of the procedural safeguards (parental rights) at least once a year	<b>9</b>			

**SUMMARY FROM THE THREE FOCUS AREAS OF THE CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW**

- Access to the General Curriculum**
- Implementation of Individual Education Plans (IEPs)**
- Provision of Non-Academic Services**
- Full Access to the District's Curriculum**
- Equal Education Opportunity**

It was evident that the IEPs designed for the selected students were fully implemented and supportive of the student's educational needs, although the content of the IEP's were marginal in terms of

including annual measurable goal statements. Second Start offers a variety of program opportunities that are matched with the students' educational profiles and which are directed toward completion of the academic requirements for high school graduation. There is a high degree of program flexibility and supports to assure academic success for Second Start students. Students attending Second Start spend a half day at the Alternative High School for the academic portion of their program. The balance of their school day is spent either in their public high school, in a vocational program, or with Transitional Employment Training (TET). TET offers individualized training services in competencies intended to assist students with pre-vocational and vocational skills. TET classes meet weekly for those students who participate and may, in addition, support students in jobs in the community.

Second Start provides academic instruction in English, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science. The visiting team expressed significant concern with the content of the Second Start curriculum and the level of differentiation occurring during classroom instruction. The curriculum provided as part of the NHDOE Case Study compliance review was incomplete and absent of any reference to NH grade-level standards or curricular competencies. In addition, classroom observations revealed little attention given to differentiation in instruction for students with varying levels of abilities, grade levels and exposure to the subject matter. It was also difficult to ascertain how students were assessed and graded in their course work at Second Start. The school expects lesson plans to be developed quarterly rather than daily, as required by administrative rules. The lesson plans were cursory and absent of detail description of lesson objectives, connection to the curriculum and measures to determine student understanding of the lesson.

The visiting team did not observe any TET services and although "competencies" related to TET were shared with the visiting team, the competencies were not supported by a documented curriculum, to include notation of student competencies or connection to the school's course of studies. The students, sending district coordinator, and parents noted that TET offers valuable services and supports in regard to employment preparation and post-secondary plans. However, the lack of a formal curriculum, student performance data, or evidence of any specialized instructional services oversight results in the program not meeting the requirements of a full special education program.

## **Transition**

### **Transition Planning**

#### **Process: Provision of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**

#### **Transition Services**

Transition Planning and Transition Services appear to be a strong suit for Second Start. All students enrolled at the Second Start Alternative High School are transitioning either to or from a public high school or to pre-vocational or vocational settings. The records of both students that were presented in the case study process had complete transition plans/services in their IEPs with appropriate service agencies and personnel involved. While there was ample documentation of transition planning, the transition goals reviewed in the IEPs were not measurable, although they did accurately reflect students' needs and were referred to frequently and monitored by the staff. Additionally, there was no documentation that students were invited to or participated in their Transition meetings, although staff assured the visiting team that students were included and did participate.

## **Behavior Strategies and Discipline**

Because the Second Start student population is small and the student/teacher ratio is low, behavior management is integrated well into the daily classroom routine. There is a strong focus on positive behavioral supports and data; both are used to track student growth and academic progress and are

regularly communicated with the sending district and the student. Physical restraints are not utilized in the Second Start program.

### **Special Education Policies**

Requirements for special education policies and procedures are met through a variety of documents including but not limited to Student/Parent Handbook, Staff Handbook, and other assorted documents. All policy and procedures were reviewed and determined to be in compliance with NHDOE requirements.

## **NEW PROGRAMS SEEKING APPROVAL FROM THE NHDOE, BUREAU OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Second Start Alternative High School has submitted a request for capacity reduction to become effective for the 2010-11 school year. Based on the NHDOE Case Study Compliance Review Process, it is recommended that the NHDOE approve this request.

### **COMMENDATIONS**

During the two-day on-site visit, the visiting team members observed many good interventions occurring in support of the Second Start students. What follows is a compilation of these observations.

1. It is evident that the staff of Second Start is dedicated to their students; the connections between staff and students are caring, supportive and constructive.
2. The foundation of Second Start is a deliberately developed “wrap around” environment that enables students to be successful academically and socially.
3. The student/staff ratio that Second Start has been able to maintain is desirable for student success. The students are well known by the staff, which is attentive and immediately available for interventions or supports as needed, preventing students from withdrawing or falling through the cracks.
4. There is good collaboration between Second Start and its sending school districts. The level of planning and communication results in a solid educational foundation for the students enrolled at Second Start.
5. The content and availability of the Transitional Employment Training (TET), CHOICES and “Group” (counseling) programs round out the offerings at Second Start and provide expanded opportunities for students who have not been successful in the “traditional” high school model.
6. Discipline and behavior management are fully integrated into the school day at Second Start. Based on William Glasser’s “Choice Theory”, James Prochaska’s “Change Theory” and incorporating Second Start’s “Five Skills”, all students and staff understand behavioral expectations as well as the consequences.
7. The interview by the visiting team of two members of the Board of Directors reflected a Board that is involved and committed to the success of the programs they oversee. The two members of the Board who met with us were knowledgeable about the components of the Second Start program and

understood the needs of the students. They have been supportive of Second Start's needs, resulting in a well developed program with a high degree of success.

**FINDINGS OF NONCOMPLIANCE IDENTIFIED AS A RESULT OF THE  
March 10-11, 2010 CASE STUDY COMPLIANCE REVIEW**

Findings of noncompliance are defined as deficiencies that have been identified through the Case Study Compliance Review Process, which are in violation of state and federal special education rules and regulations. Findings of non-compliance may result from review of policies and procedures and related application materials, case study presentations, review of student records or any other program approval activity related to the visit. **It is important to note that all findings of non-compliance listed below must be addressed in a corrective action plan and resolved within one year of this report. A template and instructions for such planning will be provided.**

**Child Specific Findings of Noncompliance to Be Addressed by Both the LEA and Private School Setting:**

**ED1109.01/ CRF 300.320 Contents of an IEP**

**Responsible LEA: Merrimack Valley Regional School District; Concord School District**

Each of the two IEPs reviewed by the visiting team did not contain measurable goals.

**ED 1102.01/CFR 300.124 Transition Planning**

**Responsible LEA: Concord School District**

One of the two IEPs did not contain measurable Transition goals.

**ED 1102.01/CFR 300.124 Transition Planning**

**Responsible LEA: Concord School District; Merrimack Valley Regional School District**

Each of the two IEPs reviewed by the visiting team had no documentation that the student had been invited to the Transition planning meetings.

**ED 1109.04(c)/CFR 300.305(e) (2) Summary of child's academic achievement and functional performance...provided prior to eligibility termination (graduation).**

**Responsible LEA: Concord School District**

One out of two IEPs reviewed by the visiting team did not contain a summary of academic achievement and functional performance although the student was scheduled to graduate.

**Program Specific Findings of Noncompliance to Be Addressed by the Private School Setting**

**ED 1114.05(j)**

**Certification of all administrative, instructional, and related services staff**

The program director of Second Start Alternative High School is *not* certified as an administrator although he is responsible for supervising and evaluating staff. Although the Executive Director is certified as an administrator (principal), he is not on site and has not had any role in supervising or evaluating staff.

**ED1114.05 (g) /CFR 300.320 9 (a) Access to equal education opportunities and ability to progress in the general curriculum/ Equal education opportunities:**

The Second Start curriculum as presented to the visiting team does not meet the standards set forth by the NH Department of Education nor does it reflect the Grade Level/ Span Expectations of the New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks. The program must support the students' progress in the general curriculum as defined in state and federal regulations.

**ED 1114.06(f) Daily Lesson Plans**

Second Start teachers are not providing daily lesson plans as required in the NH Rules for the Education of Children with Disabilities. Lesson plan are developed quarterly and are shallow with regard to content, lesson goals and objectives, materials used, and assessment procedures.

**CFR 300.350 Discipline**

The Second Start "Student and Parent Handbook" (January 2010) states that grades are based on a combination of academics and behavior. This is in violation of IDEA; behavioral issues are to be addressed through the development of behavior management plans in the IEP or Behavior Improvement Plans, all with measurable goals.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRAM-WIDE IMPROVEMENT**

Suggestions for improvement, simply stated, are recommendations provided by the visiting team that are intended to strengthen and enhance programs, services, instruction and professional development, and the NHDOE strongly encourages that serious consideration be given to the suggestions. However, discretion may be used in this area; suggestions for improvement are not considered to be required corrective actions and you may determine which suggestions most warrant follow up and address those in your corrective action plan. **System wide suggestions for improvement are listed below.** It should be noted that, in the Building Level Data Summary Report on the following pages, any suggestion made by a visiting team member that is actually a finding of noncompliance, has an asterisk (\*) before it, and it is also listed above with the findings of noncompliance.

- \*1. The Program Director of Education of the Second Start Alternative High School must obtain the appropriate administrative certification. Until that occurs, all staff evaluations must be reviewed and co-signed by the Principal of the school.
- \*2. Training in writing measurable goals (academic, functional, and transition) should be provided for all teaching or related services staff at Second Start. This will facilitate the process of receiving ED1109-compliant IEPs as well as writing appropriate goals.
- \*3. The curriculum developed and used by Second Start staff must be expanded in order to provide Second Start students with true "access to the general curriculum". Using the New Hampshire Frameworks as the foundation, the curriculum needs to include materials, scope and sequence, assessments, and any related alternative materials or curricula used.
- 4. While documentation is in compliance throughout Second Start files, attention to more detailed and frequent documentation is necessary. In particular, all documents need to be dated with month, day and

year. It was difficult to find evidence of collaboration, goal development, and student growth in the IEP reviews. Consistent documentation could assist in addressing that issue.

5. Second Start teachers employ a co-teaching model in each of the academic classrooms. Second Start is urged to define more clearly how the co-teaching process is implemented and what role each of the paired teachers play. During our classroom observations, it was difficult to ascertain what the second teacher in the room was doing while the primary teacher conducted the class.

6. Further training in Differentiated Instruction (DI) would be helpful for Second Start teachers. There was little evidence of DI during classroom observations. Since all students attend the Alternative High School because of different learning styles, in part, delivery of even small group instruction would be enhanced by DI techniques.

7. Second Start staff has begun to use a data management system called "Grade Quick". This is a valuable tool, but its use could be expanded to improve further grading tabulation, target setting, program monitoring, and overall storage and application of data.

8. Although Second Start teachers were able to explain their system of grading students and monitoring progress, they are encouraged to develop clearer written criteria for student assessment.

\*9. Daily lesson plans must be developed and utilized by the teaching staff; the current routine of quarterly lesson planning can create gaps in instruction and assessment and lead to an unclear sequence of content material. Once the general curriculum has been fully developed, daily lesson planning will be easier and will help to assure access to and continuity of the general curriculum for all students. Additionally, daily lesson planning can help to define the co-teaching responsibilities and roles.

## V. BUILDING LEVEL SUMMARY REPORTS

**USING COMPLIANCE DATA FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

**BUILDING LEVEL CASE STUDY DATA SUMMARY**

**NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM APPROVAL AND IMPROVEMENT PROCESS**

School: Second Start Alternative High School

Date: March 10-11, 2010

Programs: High School

Number of Cases Reviewed: **2**

How many of the reviewed students are age 16+? **2**

Recorder/Summarizer: Kathryn Skoglund

Name: Rhonda Bergman	Visiting
Name: Marby Blanchard	Visiting
Name: Marilyn MacArthur Name: Dr. Richard Ayers	Visiting Visiting
Name: Jonathan Sadowski	Building Level
Name: Sara K. Gray	Building Level
Name: W.A. Dinan, Ph. D	Building Level – LEA Representative
Sherry Burbank	Building Level – LEA Representative
Name: Deb Brenner	Building Level
Name: Richard Mitchell	Building Level
Name: Kelly Raitt	Building Level

Based on data collected from the Data Collection Forms, Interview Forms, Classroom Observations, etc. the following summary is intended to provide a “snapshot” of the quality of services and programs in the school in the areas of: **Access to the General Curriculum, Transition and Behavior Strategies and Discipline.**

<b>ACCESS TO THE GENERAL CURRICULUM STATEMENTS</b>						Filled in with the combined <u>number</u> of times a statement is marked on all Data Collection Forms for this school or building		
<u>Ed. 1109.01 Elements of an IEP CFR 300.320 Content of IEP</u> <u>Ed. 1109.05, Implementation of IEP 20 U.S.C. 1414 (d)</u> <u>Ed. 1115.07, Ed 1119.01(f) Provision of Non-Academic Services/Settings</u> <u>CFR 300.320(a) CFR 300.34 Ed. 1113.08, Full Access to District's Curricula</u> <u>Ed. 1113.13, Diplomas</u> <u>Ed. 1107.04 (d) Qualified Examiner</u> <u>Ed. 1109.01 CFR 300.320 Program Requirements, Content of IEP</u> <u>Ed. 1119 Protections Afforded to Children with Disabilities</u> <u>CFR 300.320(a)(1)(i)</u> "... general curriculum (i.e., the same curriculum as for nondisabled children)" <u>CFR 300.320(a)(4)(iii)</u> "To be educated and participate with other children with disabilities and non disabled children"						YES	NO	N/A
A1.) Team uses multiple measures to design, implement and monitor the student's program.						2		
A2.) All IEP goals are written in measurable terms.						1	1	
A3.) Student's IEP has at least one functional goal.						2		
A4.) Student has made progress over the past three years in IEP goals. Goal 1						2		
A5.) Student has made progress over the past three years in IEP goals. Goal 2						2		
A6.) Student <u>has access to</u> the general curriculum (as outlined by the district, sending district or NH frameworks.)						2		
A7.) Student <u>participates in</u> the general curriculum <u>in a regular education setting with non-disabled peers</u> , as appropriate, with necessary supports.						2		
A8.) When <u>participating in a regular education setting with non-disabled peers</u> with necessary supports, student <u>has made progress</u> in the general curriculum.						2		
A9.) Student <u>participates</u> appropriately in state, district and school-wide assessments.						1	1	
A10.) Student <u>shows progress</u> in state, district and school-wide assessments.						1	1	
A11.) Student <u>has opportunities</u> to participate in general extracurricular and other non-academic activities with necessary supports.						2		
A12.) Student <u>does participate</u> in general extracurricular and other non-academic activities with necessary supports.						1	1	
A13.) Was the student's most recent individual evaluation (initial or reevaluation), including a written summary report and meeting, held within 45 days of parental permission to test? <b>If not, was it due to:</b> (check all that apply)						2		
a.) Extension in Place	b.) Lack of Qualified Personnel ___Psychologist ___Educator ___Related Services ___Other	c.) Evaluation Not Completed in Time	d.) Summary Report Not Written in Time	e.) Meeting Not Held in Time	f.) Other			
<b>For High School Students:</b>						<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
A14.) Student is earning credits toward a regular high school diploma.						2		
A15.) <i>IF YES:</i> within 4 years?						1	1	
A16.) Student will earn an IEP diploma or a certificate of competency.							2	
A17.) <i>IF YES:</i> within 4 years?								
A18.) Does this school have a clear policy for earning a high school diploma?						2		

**SUMMARY OF BUILDING LEVEL DATA**



Access Strengths	Access Suggestions for Improvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Case management between sending districts and Second Start is effective. A “partnership” is evident, including parents.</li> <li>2. Good use of formal scientifically based assessment tools to monitor student progress.</li> <li>3. Staff is clearly dedicated to helping students succeed and have developed a unique environment that allows students to be successful.</li> <li>4. The availability of Transitional Employment Training (TET), CHOICES, and “Group” enhance the Second Start students’ potential for growth.</li> <li>5. The fact that discipline and management are integrated throughout the school day provides a greater opportunity for Second Start students to focus on learning and not be distracted by behaviors.</li> <li>6. The student/staff ratio provides an efficient learning atmosphere.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a deeper and broader curriculum clearly based on NH Frameworks. Include instructional materials, scope and sequence, and an assessment plan. It is critical that the students at Second Start are exposed to a full and rigorous curriculum that forms the foundation of classroom instruction.</li> <li>2. Assure that professional development is offered in support of developing measurable goals; consider connecting measurable goals to Grade Span Expectations and/or high school competencies.</li> <li>3. Consider additional professional development in the area of Differentiated Instruction. At Second Start the nature of the learning needs require differentiation of instruction on an on-going basis.</li> <li>4. Strengthen the use of accommodation and modifications in Second Start IEPs, including testing accommodations. The careful design of accommodations and modifications is critical to these students’ success. In addition, well-designed accommodations and modifications, when known and understood by the student, assist the student in becoming an effective self-advocate.</li> <li>5. Encourage Second Start teachers to participate in professional development in the “art” of co-teaching. Since two teachers are assigned to each classroom at Second Start, both could be utilized more effectively in a co-teaching model.</li> <li>6. Careful attention to record keeping, content of files, and documentation is urged. All information related to student placement, services, and supports must be included in student files with copies made and distributed as necessary.</li> <li>7. Evidence of student progress needs to be clearer. All staff should be able to know and be able to explain how a student is progressing and how that progress is monitored and reported.</li> </ol>

<b><u>TRANSITION STATEMENTS</u></b>		<b>Filled in with the combined <u>number</u> of times a statement is marked on all Data Collection Forms for this school or building</b>		
<b><u>Ed .1102 Transition Services CFR 300.43</u></b> <b><u>Ed. 1106 Process; Provision of FAPE CFR 300.124 Part C Transition</u></b> <b><u>Ed. 1109.01 Elements of an IEP (Transition Services)</u></b> <b><u>CFR 300.320(a)(7)(b) 20 U.S.C. 1402 (34)</u></b> <b><u>20 U.S.C. 1414 (d)(1)(A) and (d)(6)</u></b> <b><u>Ed. 1103 IEP Team CFR 300.320(b)</u></b> This includes movement from (a) Early Supports and Services (ESS) to preschool, (b) preschool to elementary school, or (c) age 16 or older, as well as from grade to grade and school to school.		<b>YES</b>		<b>NO</b>
T1.) Transition planning from grade to grade takes place.	2			
T2.) Transition planning from school to school takes place.	2			
T3.) Collaboration has occurred between general and special education staff in IEP development and in transition planning.	2			
T4.) <b>For a student who will turn age 14 during the IEP service period</b> (or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team,) does the IEP include <b>a statement of the transition service needs</b> that focuses on the student's course of study, such as participation in advanced-placement courses or a vocational education program? <b>Ed 1109.01 (10)</b>	NA			
<b>For students under age 16, answer only the first 4 statements above. Then skip to the next page. If the student is age 16 or older during the course of the IEP, answer all statements on this page.</b>				
T5.) Transition planning is designed as a results oriented process that promotes movement from school to the student's desired post-school goals.	2			
T6.) IEP team includes parent as part of transition planning.	2			
T7.) IEP team and process includes student as part of transition planning.	2			
T8.) IEP includes current level of performance related to transition services.	2			
T9.) There is documentation that the student has been invited to attend IEP meetings.			2	
T10.) A statement of the transition service needs is included in the IEP.	2			
T11.) The statement of transition service needs focuses on the student's course of study (e.g. vocational programming, advanced placement).	2			
T12.) Transition plan includes coordinated, <u>measurable</u> , annual IEP goals and includes transition services that will reasonably enable the student to meet the post-secondary goals. <b>(required data for federal statistics purposes)</b>	1			1
T13.) Statement of needed transition services is presented as a coordinated set of activities.	2			
T14.) The IEP includes a statement of needed transition services and considers instruction.	2			
T15.) The IEP includes a statement of needed transition services and considers community experiences.	2			
T16.) The IEP includes a statement of needed transition services and considers development of employment skills.	2			
T17.) Student is informed prior to age 17 of his/her rights under IDEA.	2			
<b>Only the following 4 statements may be answered N/A if appropriate. <u>All statements above must be answered Yes or No.</u></b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	
T18.) There is documentation that representatives of other agencies have been invited to IEP meetings.	1			1
T19.) The IEP includes a statement of needed transition services and considers related services.	2			
T20.) The IEP includes a statement of needed transition services and considers development of daily living skills.	1			1
T21.) If the student is preparing to graduate this year, there is a summary of the student's <b>academic achievement and functional performance</b> , which includes recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his or her post-secondary goals.		1		1

Transition Strengths	Transition Suggestions for Improvement
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Realistic transition planning takes place for Second Start students, keeping in mind their needs, interests, and abilities.</li> <li>2. Data shows many Second Start “graduates” are successful in their post-secondary choices.</li> <li>3. The involvement of Second Start staff as students’ transition to their sending school or post-secondary locations is positive and constructive. Second Start staff truly knows and cares for their students.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assure that Transition planning is truly a coordinated set of activities and that all required elements of the Transition process are addressed and documented.</li> <li>*2. All Transition meetings must be held as the student’s needs indicate (or change) and all necessary team members must be in attendance and attendance documented.</li> <li>3. Assure that all Transition Plans and meetings are documented and kept in the student’s file.</li> <li>*4. All Transition goals must be measurable.</li> </ol>

## SUMMARY OF BUILDING LEVEL DATA

<b>BEHAVIOR STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE</b>		<b>Filled in with the combined number of times a statement is marked on all Data Collection Forms for this school or building</b>		
<u>Ed. 1109 Program</u> <u>CFR 300.324</u> <u>Ed. 1124 Disciplinary Procedures</u> <u>CFR 300.530-300.536</u> <u>20 U.S.C. 1415 (K)</u> <u>Child Management – Private Schools</u> <u>RSA 169-C Child Protection Act</u>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
B1.) Data are used to determine impact of student behavior on his/her learning.		2		
B2.) Has this student ever been suspended from school?		2		
B3.) If yes, for how many days?		2 days; 15 days		
B4.) If appropriate, a functional behavior assessment has been conducted.		1		1
B5.) IEP team has addressed behaviors that are impacting student learning.		2		
B6.) A behavior intervention plan has been written to address behaviors.		1		1
B7.) All individuals working with the student have been involved in developing behavior intervention strategies.		2		
B8.) Specialized training for implementing interventions, strategies and supports has been provided to parents, providers and others as appropriate.		1		1
B9.) Results of behavior intervention strategies are evaluated and monitored.		2		
B10.) A school-wide behavior intervention model exists.		X		
<b>Behavior Strategy Strengths</b>		<b>Behavior Strategy Suggestions for Improvement</b>		
<p>1. Second Start staff have begun using “Grade Quick” (a software data management system) resulting in an increase of data collected and analyzed, both academic and behavioral.</p> <p>2. The existence of “Group”, a once per week student support session, is a valuable tool used effectively by students and staff.</p>		<p>1. Continue to develop staff expertise in the use of “Grade Quick”. The proper application of this tool will result in a clearer student profile, as well as provide better understanding of the impact of student behavior on academic achievement.</p> <p>2. When using Behavioral Contracts, it is suggested that specific behavioral goals are included along with appropriate measurement procedures.</p> <p>3. The visiting team recommends that the “5 School-Wide Behaviors” be included in “Grade Quick” as a data point.</p>		

## Summary of Building Level Strengths and Suggestions

Strengths	Suggestions for Improvement
<p>1. It is evident that the teachers and staff of Second Start Alternative High School are dedicated to the success and well-being of their students. They are knowledgeable about their needs, both academic and behavioral, and are capable of supporting the students in an effective “wrap around” model.</p> <p>2. There is evidence of productive partnerships and planning between Second Start and its sending districts.</p> <p>3. Parents of the students at Second Start are aware of and grateful for the significant efforts shown by the staff on behalf of the students.</p> <p>4. The administration and leadership of Second Start are aware of the success of its staff and students, but recognizes that work can be done to improve the curriculum and preparedness of the staff; staff is open to feedback and knowledge of “best practices”.</p> <p>5. A significant effort has been made by Second Start to enhance its offerings in the area of social and emotional support and development.</p> <p>6. The availability of TET, “Choices” and “Group” are significant offering for the Second Start students.</p> <p>7. The evident integration of discipline throughout the school day results in little disruption due to behavioral issues.</p> <p>8. The Board of Directors is knowledgeable about the operations of Second Start and has been very supportive of the work through budget development and the provision of resources.</p>	<p>1. More attention must be given to the curriculum by the staff of Second Start. A foundation was developed last fall however, this initial effort must be expanded in the areas of instructional objectives, intended outcomes as related to Grade Level standards and Competencies, related materials, and directly connected assessments of student performance; both formative and summative. Good examples of curriculum are available from other private secondary special education schools in the state.</p> <p>2. More focus needs to be on the acceptance and/or development of IEPs. It is the responsibility of the sending districts to submit fully compliant IEPs, but Second Start staff also needs to understand the requirements for developing or revising IEPs that meet the state and federal requirements.</p> <p>3. Second Start Alternative High School has planned well for the numbers of staff necessary to provide effective programs for its students. However, it is recommended that instructional staff focus on a more effective and efficient co-teaching model when two teachers are in the same classroom. It has been suggested that professional development be provided in the co-teaching model and in Differentiated Instruction.</p> <p>4. *In lieu of quarterly lesson plans, daily lesson planning needs to be a regular practice.</p>